



July 5, 2018

Greg Walden, Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC

Gregg Harper, Chairman
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC

Sent via email to: Samantha Bopp | Staff Assistant
U.S. House Committee on Energy and Commerce

Dear Chairmen Walden and Harper:

Thank you for your recent inquiry of Colorado Hospital Association (CHA) regarding sexual assault and SANE care in Colorado health care facilities. We agree that this is an important and sensitive topic. While CHA serves a statewide coordinating role and as a resource in many areas of health care within our state and on a wide variety of topics, we currently are not actively involved with the state's SANE program. That said, Colorado is fortunate as a state to have been historically focused on this issue and does have many resources in place to help care for victims of sexual assault.

We provide below answers to the questions you posed to us in your letter and identify resources available to Colorado hospitals and patients.

1. How many hospitals in Colorado is Colorado Hospital Association aware of that have a SANE program?

The Colorado Department of Public Safety's Division of Criminal Justice maintains a website with resources for victims including a current list of [SANE facilities](http://cdpsdocs.state.co.us/ovp/sexual-assault-programs/SANELocations2018.pdf) (<http://cdpsdocs.state.co.us/ovp/sexual-assault-programs/SANELocations2018.pdf>). That list indicates that there are 34 facilities across the state. The facilities are hospitals, freestanding emergency departments and victim assistance organizations.

2. Does Colorado Hospital Association maintain a database of hospitals and/or other entities across Colorado that have a SANE Program? If so, is it publicly available?

CHA does not maintain a database of hospitals and/or other entities across Colorado that have a SANE Program. The State of Colorado maintains a list, and it is publicly available on its website (<http://cdpsdocs.state.co.us/ovp/sexual-assault-programs/SANELocations2018.pdf>).

3. What steps, if any, has the Colorado Hospital Association taken to increase access or address the lack of access to SAFE kits in hospitals in Colorado? Does CHA partner with law enforcement agencies in any capacity to provide access to SAFE kits?

CHA currently is not actively involved with the state's SANE program. The State does however, have the benefit of a competitive grant that was awarded in 2013 to UHealth Memorial Hospital in Colorado Springs. With this grant from the Division of Criminal Justice, UHealth Memorial Hospital accepted responsibility for overseeing the Colorado SANE/SAFE Project.

Oversight for the Colorado SANE/SAFE Project is conducted by a Board of Directors. Colorado does have the benefit of law enforcement partnerships in that the Colorado Bureau of Investigations provides kits to health care facilities at no charge. Further, law enforcement has no current backlog of analysis and meets a 90-day turnaround, which exceeds the national average.

Since inception in 2013, Colorado SANE/SAFE Project has provided training to more than 400 RN and advanced practice providers. The program often trains site coordinators and providers as well through their Medical Forensic Exam (MFE) course which is for providers who have not completed the 64-hour SANE training. This allows exams to be performed in more areas within Colorado. The project also sends instructors to rural Colorado twice each year to conduct this training.

In addition to the course described above, the Project provides the 64-hour didactic course, (which allows students to sit for the national certification tests), hands-on clinical labs, preceptorship for providers who want further assistance and 24/7 technical assistance. Additionally, a 24-hour Advanced Forensic Nurse Examiner course for SANEs was just released. In addition to classroom-based education and skills labs, these courses are available online and free or charge. This has helped Colorado health care facilities in rural and remote areas of the state offer this important service.

4. What challenges has Colorado Hospital Association identified that hospitals face in providing access to these services? How is Colorado Hospital Association working with your hospitals to address those challenges?

CHA currently is not actively involved with the state's SANE program. Member hospitals have not identified to CHA challenges to providing access to SANE services. Generally, Colorado hospitals, like facilities in many western states, face geographic and financial challenges in rural and frontier areas of the state that often impact access to services.

As described above, the [UHealth Memorial Hospital program](https://www.uhealth.org/professionals/education-programs/colorado-sexual-assault-program/#training-for-professionals) offers a variety of options for hospitals in remote areas, with and without SANE staff. This program includes training, online assistance and resources and after-hours technical assistance. Here is the link to the program's website: <https://www.uhealth.org/professionals/education-programs/colorado-sexual-assault-program/#training-for-professionals>. This training commitment and format has helped mitigate many of the geographic and financial challenges often faced by rural health care providers.

The Project is in close contact with the programs and hospitals throughout Colorado and tracks inquiries and questions. These are used to trend issues, which in turn is used to develop training.

- 5. For hospitals in Colorado that do not have a SANE program, does Colorado Hospital Association provide guidance, standards, or best practices on how to treat patients that come to the hospital seeking a SAFE kit? If so, what is recommended? Please provide copies of such guidance. Do the procedures vary for hospitals in rural and urban areas or based on the availability of local alternatives?**

CHA currently is not actively involved with the state's SANE program. UHealth Memorial Hospital offers [best practice training](https://s3.amazonaws.com/uhealth-wp-uploads/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/28124927/MHS-SAFE-SANE-Medical-Response-to-Sexual-Assault-Patients-2017-Flyer.pdf) for medical professionals in areas where SANE and SAFE kits are not available (<https://s3.amazonaws.com/uhealth-wp-uploads/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/28124927/MHS-SAFE-SANE-Medical-Response-to-Sexual-Assault-Patients-2017-Flyer.pdf>).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this information. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,



Steven J. Summer
President and CEO

Cc: The Honorable Diana DeGette, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

Michelle Greenhalgh & Sahil Chaudhary (via email)
Rep. Diana DeGette Office